PROJECT 1984-1

MOBILIZATION PLANNING

General Albert C. Wedemeyer, USA, Retired

Interviewed by

Colonel Don H. Hampton, USA

1984

FOREWORD

This oral history transcript has been produced from a tape-recorded interview with General Albert C. Wedemeyer, USA, Retired, conducted by Colonel Don H. Hampton, USA, as part of the Academic Year 1984 US Army War College/US Army Military History Institute's Mobilization Planning Program.

Users of this transcript should note that the original verbatim transcription of the recorded interview has been edited to improve coherence, continuity and accuracy of factual data. No statement of opinion or interpretation has been changed other than as cited above. The views expressed in the final transcript are solely those of the interviewee and interviewer. The US Army War College/US Army Military History Institute assumes no responsibility for the opinions expressed, or for the general historical accuracy of the contents of this transcript.

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[Begin Tape W-170, side 1]

GEN WEDEMEYER: Well, we're not going to sit here and let an old man reminisce because they're prone to do that. You all can ask the questions. I should explain to you, Colonel Hampton, I have had a great deal of pleasure -- Mrs. Wedemeyer and I -- of getting people like you -- you are generally interesting people. I have had to run the gamut of famous authors. Manchester, who wrote MacArthur. He wrote a more recent one on Churchill. God, you must read it! It's just wonderful. There are going to be two volumes. I have read the first volume, and it was just great. I

have toll on all these warfighters, authors, John Chamberlain, the economist; Hyack, the Nobel prize winner; and Freidman, the Nobel prize economist. You are talking to a military man who has tremendous interests in economists -- my interest started early. I was interested in economists before I got any rank. My dad was a history buff. That was his hobby. He was a doctor and a great reader. He had me reading history and biographies when I was very young, and I am glad he did. A strong economy generally will result in a nation with stable political situations. To put it crudely, the people with full dinner pails are going to retain the same people in power. Also, you always have the capacity for inner discipline; strong military for external or internal forces that threaten your government. So, a strong economy should be of paramount interest even to military men. I made a talk to the National War College, the opening talk on strategy for many years, right after it was open. It started about 1947 or 1948 I think. I made the opening talk, called "Grand Strategy," to excite, inspire, generate ideas, and discuss the whole subject of strategy. I pointed out that there are four general instruments of national policy: political, economic, psycho-social -- I put psychological and sociological

together -- and the military. Those are the four instruments of national policy. The economic was the most powerful of all, because the others live and breathe as a result of a strong economy. If you have a strong economy, you can have a strong military.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, sir. I wonder if you could review your assignments just before you went into the War Department?

GEN WEDEMEYER: Well, I started to be a doctor of medicine. I had 2 years. Of course, I had 4 years of Latin. Seventy years ago you had to have Latin and German. The Germans were quite proficient in surgical instruments and development, too, in biochemistry. They were really foremost, don't sell them short. My father, as I told you earlier, was a reader. He read a great deal of history. I was an athlete. I played football and baseball in high school. My father used to say, "I think you should go out and exercise." I had my nose into a book. I loved to read. I had a wonderful library. It is gone now. I sent 2,200 books to the Hoover Library about 2 months ago. This is, sort of, reminiscent. I have about 200 or 300 autographed books upstairs. I think I will send them,

too, autographed by Churchill. In fact, those books right there were autographed by Churchill to me. That's his Marlborough, four volumes. Anyway, that was my background. There was a senator named George W. Norris. He was called the stormy senator of Nebraska. He was a friend of my maternal grandfather, who was Irish. I'm half Irish and half German. My mother was Irish Catholic; my father was German Lutheran. Anyway, this senator felt beholden to my grandfather, who was a judge or something. Most all Irish were into politics in some way in Nebraska in the pioneer days. So, he gave me an appointment to West Point. I did not do well there at all. My Latin didn't help me with the hyperbolas, trapezoids, calculus, and stuff like that. I hardly did any of it. One thing -- I went there and studied about the various philosophers. One of them was Pythagorean, the one that is the square tube, the sides equal of hypothesis of a right angle. Well, I had never heard of that theorem, but I did know that he was a great philosopher, Pythagoras. There I was. That's how stupid I was to go to an engineering school when I was planning all along on going to medical school. I graduated below the middle of my class. I didn't do well. I went into the infantry, not by choice necessarily, but by order. If you didn't do

well, they put you in the infantry. That is the way it was. I went to the Infantry School, and then I was kept there as an instructor. From there I went to the Artillery School as an aide to a general, and I became attached to the Artillery School class. Then I went out to the Philippines and served with the infantry in the Philippines from 1923 to 1925. After that I went to Fort Washington, Maryland, with a battalion of infantry. Then they sent me back out to China from there. I spent 2 years in China, and while in China, I had received orders to go to Corregidor, and to help plan the beach defenses. That was in 1931. I was down there 3 years. Then in '34, I was ordered to Leavenworth. I had a 2-year course, the last 2-year course given at Fort Leavenworth. It was an excellent course. The curriculum was excellent in military history. We had a course in the armies. They don't anymore, do they?

INTERVIEWER: The primary division and below.

GEN WEDEMEYER: Do you have a logistic problem involving a corps -- to give you some concept of the logistical difficulties? Well, I finished there, and I did well at Leavenworth -- began to pick up a little

bit and they sent me to the German War College for 2½ years. Then I came back and was ordered to Leavenworth as an instructor. Only one time, the whole time I was in the Army, did I ask not to be sent to an assignment. I never did ask for anything in the Army. Why should I?. I had such an interesting time, and I enjoyed it so much. Anyway, I went in to the Chief of Infantry -- the same one that became mad as hell at me a little later. I didn't like him. He was a great big, blustery fellow, named Lynch -- Major General Lynch. I said, "Sir, I have been an aide, and I have been away from troops. I have been 2 years at Leavenworth now, 2 years at the German War College, and I'm an ordnance instructor at Fort Leavenworth. Of course, I'll do whatever I'm told to do. I'll go anyplace I'm told to go, but I think, I would be more rounded out if you could give me 1 year of troop duty somewhere." He said, "Where would you like to go?" I think I was a captain. I said, "Fort Benning, sir." He sent me back there in a hurry. Then [General George C.] Marshall was made Chief of Staff, and he ordered me back to War Plans. I was there for 2 or 3 years of that. After the Quebec Conference, they created a new theatre of operations, Southeast Asia. I was sent out there with Mountbatten [Admiral Lord Louis]. I forgot to mention

something about when I was ordered by General Marshall to the general staff. About 6 months after I got there in the War Plans Division, I was told by the chief of that division, Brigadier General [Leonard T.] Gerow, who was a hell of a nice, bright guy, "I have a job for you. It is a tough one." It was July 1941, that I got this job on my birthday. I remember it very well. The Secretary of the Navy, the Secretary of the Army and Air Force -- it was all one then -- were ordered by the President to have a mobilization plan in the event of war. There was a strong feeling in our country against going into the war. That was the summer of 1941. Those two men came back and Secretary [Henry L.] Stimson sent for Marshall. He was told that we would have to evolve an Army/Air Force plan -- how we would fight if we had to go to war. So, Marshall then sent for his War Plans Division chief. You know how it is. They pass the buck until it gets down to the poor sergeant, and he is the one that carries it out. So, then, Gerow came back to my office, a little cubbyhole. I was just starting out in War Plans Division going over the various war plans that we had. They were, to me, ridiculous in the light of my experience. We had a white plan, a red plan, an orange plan, and a yellow plan. All of these plans were for various

contingencies. The Germans had it over us like a tent on that kind of stuff. God, I learned a lot about war planning there -- to make it more practical, less words. I'm criticizing my own country, but I'm doing it constructively. So, that is the job I got. I worked on that plan for a couple of months. I called on Hap Arnold and he was very helpful to me by giving me some brilliant young fellows to help me on air war planning: Harold George was a brilliant fellow, a very creative man, kind of a wild mind. Then there was an O. A. Anderson, who was on my staff for awhile. He was the man that went up over South Dakota higher than any human being had ever been before, I think, in a balloon. Then I had Larry Cuter, whom I thought was brilliant. I had a fellow named Hanseal, who got to be a general in the Air Force. Sammy Anderson, too. There were a lot of bright airmen there that helped me. The Victory Program, they called it, and that's what it was. Just imagine yourself, if you were given a job like that. You would want to know; you are familiar with your own history. I probably was boring most people, because I read a lot of history. What we wanted to do was prepare for a global war -- two fronts, one enemy. You know it was all conjecture. I asked my boss, General Gerow, who was awfully nice to

me, "Tell me, sir, would you answer some questions for me?" He said, "You write them down. You just say what you think they are." God, that was an awful responsibility. He said, "I'll take you up and you can ask General Marshall the same thing." I said, "All right." So, I asked him. He said, "Let's go in and talk to Stimson." You know, these were men who couldn't give me a concise, meaningful policy. Right now, if you fellows were to go down and ask Schultz, the Secretary of State, "What is our policy with reference to the Middle East? We know a lot of minor objectives; but, overall, what are you trying to accomplish in the Middle East?" I think, if I were Secretary of State, I would say, "I want to protect that source of energy. That is going to be the strategic objective." How we are going to do it -- that's another thing. That's subordinate, but the objective is to protect that source of energy there. Who is threatening it? Well, gradually, the Soviets are encircling it, right now. They are smart as hell in taking their time, but they are doing it. They are penetrating the governments and are subverting the governments that are using it or controlling it, and so forth. That's going on right here under our noses. That's what I had to do. It was a lot of fun. I

really mean it was a lot of fun and a lot of responsibility. I was given a hell of a lot of authority. I was told by the Secretary of War, "If you have any problems at all -- any trouble -- just come see me, or use my name." I was in pretty good order. I could go out and talk to anybody. I had to know about the manpower that would be available for military forces. How many would the Navy be using? My Navy officer was an awfully good friend of mine, Admiral Cook. He was the number one man in his class at Annapolis. He was awfully nice to me. We had no branch consciousness; we worked together beautifully. Where was I? Oh, yes, coming out there with Mountbatten -- I was down in India with him for a year. I didn't know it, but they were having problems with him up in China. Stilwell [Lieutenant General Joseph W.] was the commander up there. One day I received a message at 2 o'clock in the morning. My aide came in and knocked on my door and said, "General, I have a very important telegram for you." It said, "You will go to China within 48 hours and assume command there." My God, that was for 2½ years until the war ended. I then came home and became DCSOPS [Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans]. I had that up until the time I was about to retire. Senator Taft was running

for the Presidency, and his family were friends with my family. Bob Taft had always been very friendly to me. He was 4 or 5 years older, but he was always very friendly. He said, "Have you been in the Army long enough to retire?" I said, "Yes, I have." He said, "Do you mind coming and helping me run for the Presidency? I'm sure I'm going to make it." He was Mr. Republican, and I was a Republican -- as much as an Army officer can be. He said I was to retire, and he would make me Secretary of Defense. Well, I talked to my wife about it, and thought about it, and talked to a few older officers, too. I talked to General Marshall. Everybody advised me to do it. So, I retired early with 10 years to go. Now, he didn't make it. What to do? I went into industry. I had a very interesting job at AVCO Manufacturing Corporation, up in New York, as executive vice president. I didn't do very well in that. I didn't like the attitude of management toward labor. I'm not a liberal and I'm not a logistician. I didn't get along, but they were nice to me. Monetarily they gave me more pay, and that flatters you a little. They also gave me stock options. I had inherited this outfit here. My wife inherited 200 acres here. This house -- her ancestors built this house in George Washington's time. This

house is 200 years old. But, I ran along inheriting money, 300 acres there, 300 acres way up in the corner. I have 1100 acres altogether, and I'm farming it. I had 800 acres in corn last year and lost money because of the drought. This year, I'm going to do better, I'm sure. There you have the old boy's program altogether.

INTERVIEWER: How did you go about arriving at your estimates of manpower in the Victory Program?

GEN WEDEMEYER: That question is asked so many times. I examined and read. My wife will tell you -- I burned the midnight oil reading about foreign armies. In a way, I'm back down to the time of the Middle Ages. It worked out. You would be surprised. I talked to a professor at Princton. He was interested, too. He said it was remarkable how close we came. Here's what happened. I read about this and it came out that you could take about 10 percent of the male population. As the military became a more technological field and became less the pioneer days of the horse cavalry out fighting Indians -- you had to have more technology. You had to introduce more technical operators. And who is equipped to do that? Women. Communications, optical instruments, and stuff like that. Now if he

would have sent some of them into my big pool and enabled me to stick to that 10 percent, I could have been more accurate.

[End Tape W-170, side 1]

[Begin Tape W-170, side 2]

GEN WEDEMEYER: So, that was it. That was the way I did it. So, it was about 10 percent of the total population. At that time, I think, our population was around 140 million approximately. Then how many million did Admiral Cook want? He said he thought he could get along with 3 million. I estimated your Army -- ground forces -- at around 8 million. That left me about 3 million for air. These are great big numbers you are talking about. I know you are going to say, "My god, you were lucky." It was 8,700,000, I think we ended up with in the Army.

INTERVIEWER: Did you take into consideration the needs of the economy?

GEN WEDEMEYER: Oh, yes -- the interior economy, the internal discipline, and things like that. Oh, yes. I certainly did. The prisons had to operate. Hospitals

had to operate on the base -- that's what you called it.

INTERVIEWER: You didn't confine yourself to solely military requirements?

GEN WEDEMEYER: No, I started the other way around. How much do I have? Then I was going to cut the pattern of the military to suit. We had a man in the secretariat, named John J. McCloy. He was reversing everything, and I battled with that guy. It was just like the budget. What is your job? What is your objective? What are the means that you have to have for that, instead of saying we had $5 million, now here is your job and here is your objective. You see what I mean? You cannot be intemperate in your policymaking and just undertake a commitment that is absolutely astronomical. You know, you have to use judgment in the matter. Follow me?

INTERVIEWER: Sir, based on your earlier comments, you weren't overwhelmed with the guidance you received when you were initially tasked with writing the Victory Program.

GEN WEDEMEYER: Well, yes, I was overwhelmed. You would be, too. There were so many facets to the problem that I felt incapable of solving. So, it was conjectural. I told General Marshall that. I said, "Sir, I've put the best I could into this and tried." My reasoning would be going back into history, about which I had a fairly good background. But, specifically, how many troops were in the Roman legion, I would go way back there -- I just could tell it was about 10 percent of the male population.

INTERVIEWER: What about the guidance you received from Marshall or Stimson?

GEN WEDEMEYER: Well, I'm not downgrading them. Those were great men. Marshall was a great man. I know he had been criticized. I had to struggle with him. To tell you how you could quickly make a person over you angry, and you would just eat your heart out for doing it. At the Casablanca Conference, Marshall had my bedroom right next to his, so we could talk at night about the agenda for the following day. The British were there in force, as we were. The General had dinner that night with the Prime Minister and the President. They were there in a cottage near the hotel

in Casablanca, where Marshall, I, and all the other planners were staying. Well, anyway, he came back one night and I was propped up in bed. He had a meeting scheduled the following morning. He sat on the edge of my bed and said, "Wedemeyer, have you ever heard anything about unconditional surrender? Has that ever been brought up in your planning group?" I said, "Yes, sir, it is sort of latrine gossip. None of us in the group I'm associated with take it seriously, General." "Well, it is being taken seriously by the Prime Minister and the President. Tonight at dinner they brought that up. And I think they are inclined to do it. What do you think about it?" I said, "We are playing right into Goebbels' hands, sir." Here I was, $2\frac{1}{2}$ years observing and experiencing the propaganda of Goebbels, which was beautifully done. You had to kick yourself and say, "My God, are we that kind of people? Are the Jews really dictating all our policies, and stuff like that?" That is what you would have believed, if you would have believed Goebbels. I felt that we were just compelling the German people to fight tenaciously, cause more loss of life, and make more and more a decisive victory. Now what happens at those meetings -- combined staff meetings -- in the mornings the British and the Americans would meet separately.

In the afternoon we combined and would take up the things on the combined agenda. So, that morning, General Marshall said, "I want you to mention to the American chiefs your views on this unconditional surrender idea." I might add that neither Cook nor Wedemeyer opened their traps. We sat there virtually carrying paper clips to our cheeks. We didn't say much, only when called upon by any member of the joint chiefs. I wasn't in any exalted position at all, just an advisor. I liked all the American chiefs, and I think one of the great men there -- the joint chiefs, the American chiefs of World War II -- was the Navy man, [Admiral Ernest J.] King. But he got the least credit. The British hated his guts because he didn't want to break up his naval units out in the Far East. They didn't like him at all. You never see anything in any of Churchill's writings or any of the big writers of the British, extolling the cooperation or the qualities of King, but you do of Hap Arnold and Marshall. Marshall was good; there is no doubt about it. Arnold was a good airplane pilot, I would say, and a nice man. His boys liked him; young men liked him. I visited fighter stations along the coast of Africa with Arnold, and I could tell the men always admired the hell out of him. He was natural with them. But he

didn't have much up here in a deep way. I would say he was a damned good mechanic and airplane pilot. In those early days of air coming into our consideration, those were the type of men as a rule, sort of the daredevil type. Dave Twining and I took an examination for the Air Force together in 1923. I failed it -- my eyes. Twining made it. He became Chief of the Air Force, too. This gives you fellows background on how those things were operated years ago. You have to get some little lessons from it.

INTERVIEWER: Sir, when you began identifying requirements for the Victory Program . . .

GEN WEDEMEYER: How do you mean, weapon wise or tactically?

INTERVIEWER: Initially, sir, for all the requirements, whether they were for manpower or . . . ?

GEN WEDEMEYER: Well, I did find out, after I conjectured that we were going to have a two front war, which is abhorrent to any leader in history, you don't want to have two widely separated theatres of war to fight. Logistically, it makes your problem almost

impossible. At the Argonaut Conference, they solved the problem. They didn't do it for logistics reasons. They did it for political reasons, but they made this decision up there -- that we would defeat the Germans first, then go out to the Far East and fight the Japs. Well, you gentlemen were too young to know, but there was a strong feeling of vengeance on the part of the American people after Pearl Harbor. We lost several thousand men there who didn't have even an opportunity to fight back. The President got on the radio and said something about the infamy on December 7. Anyway, fellows it was decided that that's the way we would do it, and I said, "Strategic offensive in Europe, fellows, and strategic defensive in the Far East. We don't have the resources for a strategic offensive in both. The emphasis is going to be on the strategic offensive. In the strategic defensive, though, you are not going to give that enemy complete freedom. You are going to have occasional localized offensive actions. You could do that in a strategic defensive concept." That was a big solution early for me. Now I certainly ought to have known something about the Germans. I just left there. I served with a German unit even. I observed maneuvers in summer and fall of '38. So, I did have some idea of the German military capabilities.

That would be tactical more than strategic. But there was one expression that they used a lot when I was over there. When I was first there, they were talking about it. Adolf Hitler was saying, "Drang nach oesten -- drive to east." That was against the Russians. That was the idea. Of course, when they went into the war, they teamed up with the Russians. Everybody was surprised. The British were taken aback by it. The French were. They were surprised that the Russians teamed up with Hitler. Joseph Stalin and Adolf Hitler hated each other, and Hitler had built all of his feeling that caused concern on the part of his people, by downgrading the Bolsheviks, as they were called. My problem was eased a great deal among my little group of fellows. We could then concentrate on what we needed there, and what are the enemy capabilities. Surface and air. We knew they had tremendous air capabilities. We knew they had tremendous ground capabilities, but we knew his Navy was limited. It would be a submarine deal that would restrict our logistics sense, and that's all. That was the major thing. Their big battleships were ultimately sunken by the British. They couldn't carry on because of our air reconnaissance. That meant everything. They couldn't hide out very long. That is what happened to them,

too. They would go and hide down in South American ports. They would resort to all kinds of stratagems, but they didn't succeed. The submarine did take its toll. You gentlemen have no concept of the concern that we had in the War Plans Division because of the toll taken on our convoys going to Murmansk and England.

INTERVIEWER: Did you crank into the material requirements the danger of the U-boats?

GEN WEDEMEYER: Oh, yes, I had to consider that. But I didn't estimate the toll in any way. I was wrong -- a great deal wrong -- in the estimates I made. They were much greater. That's why I say, "in our group." When I use the pronoun, "I," please realize that I'm talking about a bunch of loyal youngsters who were helping me. They knew I threw myself right on their help. I told you how we operated. Ask any one of them today. They will tell you it was a tremendous experience for all of us, but we were a team. We really were. That bunch of kids worked with me, and there are some of them who are now four-star generals. A fellow named Bud Underwood -- I had never heard of him. He is down in El Paso. I got a letter from him this past week because of

something I had written that was published in the American Legion Magazine.

INTERVIEWER: Sir, you have gone into some detail on your estimates and how you arrived at your estimates for manpower requirements. How did you arrive at the major end items of equipment estimates?

GEN WEDEMEYER: That is a good question. Having arrived at the number of infantry divisions, rifle divisions -- I think around 15,000 people in those days. I believe I'm right. I don't trust my memory too much anymore, but there was a time when I had all this stuff at my fingertips. Armored divisions -- a certain number, I think that was a little less -- around 12,500 or something like that. Anyway, I knew those units and how many divisions I thought we needed. I'll tell you one thing I did awfully stupid. My youngsters didn't catch it either. I would have had a battlefield where you would have had to have traffic cops all over the place and nobody to fight a war, because I had too many vehicles moving onto the battlefield. God, I tried to have two armored divisions with one mechanized division -- motorized division you might call it -- motorized infantry

division. If we had what Major Wedemeyer recommended, we wouldn't have been able to fight a war. Fortunately, we caught it in time. Maybe it was brought out in this, I was going to each one of the chiefs of branches, which I had authorizations, I told you, to go anyplace. I would notify the Chief of Cavalry, or Chief of Infantry. I would call the general's secretary and say, "This is Colonel Wedemeyer, and I would like to see the Chief of Infantry, his operations man, and any key member on the staff you think would be appropriate. I want to talk to him about this war plan." Incidently, Marshall, bless his heart, called all the chiefs in and told them what I was doing, and he had me there so that they could look at this bloke. They were wonderful. It was a tremendous response. We were at war, you know, or just at the brink of war.

INTERVIEWER: What was your relationship to the War Manpower Commission and the War Production Board at that period?

GEN WEDEMEYER: The estimate of mine, in large numbers, had been approved by the President of the United States, because the secretaries took it over. So, the

President of the United States knew that we were going to have around 14 million men in the Armed Forces. That had a little influence. That's why I knew Colonel Byrnes had something to do with it.

INTERVIEWER: Are you suggesting then, that you developed your estimates independent of the War Department?

GEN WEDEMEYER: No. No. I don't mean to suggest that. Indirectly, they had to begin an allocation of resources -- industrial aluminum, for example. Everyone wanted aluminum. The Air Force wanted it; the Navy wanted it. Their estimates had to be quite liberal, as mine were, but as a result of this framework of ideas evolving from my office, I would be going to the various chiefs. Ordnance -- he was awfully interested in what I was doing; the Quartermaster General, Transportation, and Chief of Signal. All these people were interested. I don't want to downgrade what happened, but we weren't too stupid. Everything worked all right, but we did do some terrible things. I mentioned one to you already. I overestimated motorization of the battlefield. The other thing that I did was have them training

battalions of surgeons that weren't used for months. My plan wasn't laid out well. It had to be done with the Surgeon General's office -- his help; but I had doctors criticize the hell out of me. I had doctors, men needed in communities, back in civilian life -- who were doing nothing but carrying water pails. Things like that are going to happen when you are probing, as I was. You might say, "Well it's odd that you didn't have some direction from people above." I asked you earlier, "What would you find, if you went downtown right now and talked to people about it?" I have been called over to the National War College; and, incidently, I think it's wonderful. I think they are doing a wonderful job. If you fellows can get over there, go. It's great. It's a great school. They have what they call simulations. It's wonderful what they do. These kids then are called upon to do certain things. It shows their knowledge of what is in the various charters of the UN, and all that kind of stuff. It's great. The same thing should be going on now. I hope it is. That was 4 or 5 years ago, the last time I was over there. We have to coordinate and integrate better. We are not very good -- we weren't when I was there -- then, again, with the State Department. It was miserable, the relationship we had there. Those

boys over there -- a lot of these kids, nice boys, dedicated men, I'm not downgrading them, but here you had to put emphasis. War was the major thing. You had to put all your resources, material, spiritual, and everything on winning that war. The State Department had to be so oriented. You have asked a good question, and as I sit here, I don't think I'm capable of going into specifics on how the War Production Board and the War Manpower -- but I did answer partially. You take the Chief of Armor that knew how many tanks they were going to have, and it was up to them, with the help of the Ordnance Department, to give them some idea of the implications for steel, aluminum, and things like that. I couldn't go into that.

INTERVIEWER: To be more specific, when you developed your estimates of equipment, did you run those estimates by the War Production Board to get their view on the availability of raw materials and industrial powers?

GEN WEDEMEYER: It was not referred to them -- not by my group. We couldn't do that. We couldn't get into that detail. It was supposed to be done and was done by each of the infantry groups and the Ordnance

Department. I'll give you an example quickly. We had a man named [William S.] Knudsen. He used to be Chairman of the Board of General Motors. They made him a lieutenant general right from that job up there. He was a powerful guy at that time with a big job. He was the Chief of Production. He called up General Marshall's office and said, "General Marshall, if that goddamn Ordnance Department doesn't stop changing the design of the rocker system on your tanks, we won't have any tanks on the battlefields. They will be turned down in industry." General Marshall sent me over to talk to him -- General Knudsen -- right away about that. Over I went and showed him the estimate. Then I went to Ordnance and to the armored people to find out what their estimate was and why they were having trouble with their rocker system. The rocker system had been designed, but the damn Ordnance Department experts were constantly changing the designs. That happens all the time in the thickness of the armor out around in the front -- they were changing that on Knudsen. Those things had implications, deep ones. Knudsen was looking out for it, you see. That happened and those things were ironed out. You couldn't let my little group -- Wedemeyer-- have too much responsibility in that area. My God, I never

would have finished anything! I used to, sometimes, put the heat on people when I would get a report from the Chief of Infantry that they were not giving me enough 37 mm ammunition, and I would get on the phone and call them up about it. We tried to get it in a coordinated manner.

INTERVIEWER: Who did you call?

GEN WEDEMEYER: Who did I call in that case? Well now, from whom did I get the complaint? The Chief of Infantry's office. Maybe it was a major there in equipment, in that particular kind of equipment, too. For example, the 37 mm that was a new gun. It would be put into our numbers. I think I told you fellows that we had no antitank battalions in our organization before the war began. That was something new. I don't know how the Chief of Infantry handled it. He may have had a Stokes mortar, we called it -- a 4-inch mortar -- and you wanted an Eler 60 millimeter mortar. We had bazookas, rifles, and all those kinds of things to contend with. They had to designate officers in the Chief of Infantry's office. He had to have liaison constantly with ordnance, and the ordnance having

continued supervision over the War Production Board. That was where Knudsen came into the picture.

INTERVIEWER: Sir, getting back to manpower were there disagreements between McNutt, Stimson, and Marshall about the Army requirements for people?

GEN WEDEMEYER: No, they were so impressed. I told you the story, didn't I, about Kelly, Chief of Infantry, who was going to resign and all that stuff? He could retire, he had his 30 years in. He said, "What do you think that goddamn general staff is doing, Wedemeyer? They are taking the tank away from the infantry." Hell, I knew they were going to do that, but I couldn't tell him. In fact, he didn't give me a chance to answer. He was so angry. His attitude was this -- to give you the character of the man. You and I, when we are before a senior man, we stand up if he is standing up. We sit down if he tells us to sit down. In the Chief of Infantry's office there where I was called, he was pacing back and forth because he was so damn mad. He was as tall as I am, and I'm 6'2". He was as tall, but he was bigger than I. A great big, fine looking man, a little grizzly mustache, and he was mad when I got in there. That's what he said to me. Of course,

he was standing, and walking back and forth, and, fellows, I stood, too. He said, "Sit down." So, I sat down on the couch, and he kept standing; so, I stood up. He said, "Goddamn it, I said, 'sit down.'" That was his attitude. He had this little major scared to death, so I sat down. But anyway, of course, I couldn't say, "I knew that General Marshall was going to do that." General Marshall asked me what the Germans' solution was, and I told him they had armored units. He went back to his general staff and told them that. It was just that simple. Incidently, I should tell you fellows, when I came back from the German War College with these ideas, I was given directions by the Chief of Staff. His name was Craig. John Craig was awfully nice to me when I got back. He asked me about my experience over there, and I told him I was so grateful for the government allowing me to go there. And, he said, "Well, you earned it, and it was a good experience." He wanted me to go to each one of the general staff chiefs and answer any questions they wanted to ask me. Each one of them had been given a resume' of what I sent back. I went to all of them. When I got to Marshall, who was Chief of War Plans then and had just made brigadier general, he said, "Of all the experiences you have had over there for those $2\frac{1}{2}$

years, what was the thing that stood out in your mind that would apply to us?" I said, "Well, the Germans are determined never to fight another trench war. They are putting emphasis on mobility, sir."

[End Tape W-170, side 2]

[Begin Tape W-171, side 1]

GEN WEDEMEYER: So, they put in these big, heavy guns -- up to 88 mm. At the time when I was over there, they had the Tiger. In addition to that, they extended their artillery range support. Using Heinkel bombers, they extended tremendous firepower to remote areas. I said that most of the problems that I observed over there in the 2 years were in their turning movements, not in developments or tactics. They would go way out away from the main body and sweep around. They would get their Heinkels coming in and there you were. He bought that; he saw that. It was true. It was good to do that, and that's what he was doing. He was putting his emphasis on Germany. Now, you asked about the number -- he didn't have any ideas, General Marshall didn't. I'm not demeaning anybody, but we didn't know.

Right now, I don't know. I'm not privy to anything anymore.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. From your experience at the German War College, sir, did they place any emphasis on mobilization? Did you pick up anything that might have helped you?

GEN WEDEMEYER: Yes, I did, under logistics. There were several lecture visits. I visited the Heinkel Plant, for example. I took Charles Lindbergh with me to that. He was over there, and the Germans were awfully nice to him. Goering was. I was interpreter for Charles Lindbergh. Yes, they did emphasize mobilization and industrialization. They had some very bright fellows. I was trying to recall his name -- Ley, I think was one of their secretaries, one of their key men. Young men like yourselves. They put a premium on youth -- creativity. They say during World War I, that if a leader was shot in combat, that the damn platoon didn't know what to do. They put an emphasis on having seconds in command for everything. For a squad they would have a man to take over when the corporal was killed or immobilized. These were

lessons from World War I that they passed on to the students there.

INTERVIEWER: Were there any lessons from World War I that had been documented that helped you in putting together the Victory Program?

GEN WEDEMEYER: Well, no doubt reading today, I am sure you have run across things about World War II that are ancillary but connected with mobilization, equipment, movement, and all of those communications would be incidental but important to you who are studying that. I think the War Department History Division put out a hell of a lot of stuff on that. I think I'm right about that.

INTERVIEWER: Were you able to use any of those documents when you were putting together the Victory Program?

GEN WEDEMEYER: Well, they were available then!

INTERVIEWER: Following World War I, they developed the Industrial Mobilization Plan. Did you use that at all?

GEN WEDEMEYER: I don't remember specifically, but I must have. I sought every source. I even asked my superiors, people above me, about it. "Do you have any available papers that I can study?" I took a tremendous amount of time making notes of what I read the first month or two after I got that order and I had about 30 young fellows -- majors and lieutenant colonels -- who were all tops. I had just been made brigadier general then. I was Chief of Strategy and Policy. That's what that little group was in -- the Operations Division. The Operations Division was created about the time we got into the war, because General Marshall found his command post was inefficient. It didn't operate the way you all had learned about the present command setup. A fellow named McNarney, who was an Air Force general, and Arnold Nelson, who was a young, creative lieutenant colonel, came up with this new operations plan. They did away with the chiefs of branches, though. Anyway, I used every morsel of information I could get a hold of because I was probing and I was so anxious to make it practical. We didn't mobilize that many motor activations and stuff, but we did all right in armor. Hell, the British loved our armor; so did [Lieutenant General George S.] Patton. Patton sung our praises.

He was killed before the thing was all over, but I would have loved to have had the opportunity to talk to him after the operations plan was implemented. I had previously talked to him quite a lot. He used to come in and see me. I didn't know him very well. He gave the impression of being sort of harum-scarum, but he wasn't when you got to know him. He really was quite knowledgeable and was in World War I, of course, as a tanker. He had a lot of courage, and his ideas weren't always as the press would have you believe. I think he was quite a bright man, quite an able man. In fact, I guess, he was the most able man of high rank in combat that we had. Truscot [Lieutenant General Lucian K.] was also a very able combat leader. I saw him fighting in Sicily with the 3d Division. He was good. He handled that division beautifully. I think he ended up as an Army commander in the war. He also wrote a fine book -- one of the best war books I think I have read.

INTERVIEWER: Sir, did you ever hear of the protective mobilization plan?

GEN WEDEMEYER: I have heard of it, but I'm not familiar with it. I heard of it, just like I heard of

unconditional surrender. I told the general that was latrine gossip back in my group.

INTERVIEWER: Later, some of the manpower requirements and the number of divisions that you had estimated in the Victory Program were changed. For example, the manpower was raised from over 8 million to 13 million. Then the number of divisions required changed from 213 to 350. Do you recall, or did you ever hear why those changes were made?

GEN WEDEMEYER: No, sir. I received some information the other day. They are awfully nice, the Department of Defense, to send information to an old retired general. They have a four-star general meeting every year. I just received my letter from the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Wickham. He wrote a nice letter, and said he hoped I would come. I think it is in August. They are all four-star generals, retired and active, who come and talk every year. I have been to most of them. I didn't go last year. I wasn't feeling very well. They have a light division now. Have you all seen this?

INTERVIEWER: Yes, sir.

GEN WEDEMEYER: Well, you all have something to do with that then. There is a reason for it. You all have some ideas of greater mobility, and maybe it is of economic use of manpower and things that you are doing. I don't question it. I would question it but only in a positive way. I would encourage you to do things like that. A light division might have something to do with mobility and availability of a division for a quick position change from A to B. You could do it in airplanes. I don't know all the reasons behind it, but I could visualize the necessity of doing it. Did you see the memorandum that was put out by the War Department on the light division?

INTERVIEWER: Oh, yes, sir.

GEN WEDEMEYER: Okay.

INTERVIEWER: Who would you say were the most influential, either military or political leaders on mobilization during...?

GEN WEDEMEYER: The President of the United States -- the political leaders, by all means.

INTERVIEWER: Did anyone exert any sort of influence on him?

GEN WEDEMEYER: I don't think so. I don't know. I have no way of answering or knowing. See, I got out many years early. God, there I was! I was told I would be considered for Chief of Staff. I had gotten out, I didn't know that until after I had gotten out. A man named Pace used to be Secretary of the Army. When I put in my request for retirement, he wrote and told me that I was being considered for Chief of Staff. I wrote back and told him I didn't know that. I would rather be Chief of Staff than Secretary of Defense because I would feel more capable of doing it. He didn't know I was being considered for Secretary of Defense. So, there you are. I didn't tell many people about it. As it was, my face was red, even in my own little family. I told them that was what was going to happen, and it didn't happen. Everybody was sure that Taft would be elected President. He was positive that he would, and Eisenhower, himself, told me that he would never subject himself to a squirreled political campaign. He said those very words. I think when he said it, he meant it. He went over to be head of NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] Forces over in

Europe. He went to Columbia University when he left the Chief of Staff job. He was President at Columbia and then went over to Europe. While he was over there, people like Governor McKeldin, Governor Tom Dewey, Sherman Adams, Cabot Lodge, prominent political people, went over and told him he wouldn't be subjected to a political fiasco. He was a great hero back in America. He was a good President, too.

INTERVIEWER: It has been written that the military, during the early forties, perhaps had too much control over both manpower and industrial mobilization. It caused a lot of friction. How would you view that?

GEN WEDEMEYER: I think I would agree with that. You see, after Pearl Harbor there was a hysteria, really, precluding meditation or measured thought. I feel that way. It was present in all of us. We were under a terrific strain. We were subjective; we were blind. My God, this little Jap would just kill our people that way! How could they get in and do this? We had already broken their code; yet, our people in Hawaii were not alerted. Who was responsible for failure to alert them properly is something else. I could tell you this: when I was made DCSOPS, one of the first

things I did was go into that very deeply. I put two or three of the best brains I had down there to come up with a plan that would preclude a repetition of failure to disseminate proper information at an appropriate time for stuff like that. I don't know if it is still in effect. That was in 1949.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think this friction that existed between the military and the civilian leaders inhibited the war effort at all?

GEN WEDEMEYER: No, sir. I don't think any friction developed that would militate against the war effort, but it made for hard feelings among certain individuals. The distribution of aluminum between the Air Force and the Navy caused some pretty harsh exchanges. Steel was another example -- not only the commodity, the raw materials, but the capacity to put them into use. I mean the industrial power, there was friction there. Let's see, for example, the tank and the Navy. There was great conflict there for plain steel. I think it was the Baltimore Locomotive Works that had some, and General Motors had some of the tank contracts. Knudsen was the top executive. I talked to him quite a lot. He was very garrulous. He would talk

my head off. This dear old man didn't speak good English. He was a Swede. I went up there two or three times to see him. After my first meeting with him, General Marshall ordered me to go see him about the rocker arm on the tank. So, I went over to Aberdeen and talked to some of the ordnance people. Everything I did, I did by order, like you would do. If you were in my theatre in China, you could say, "Well, General Wedemeyer said I was to do this."

INTERVIEWER: Was the military, at that time, tuned to the sensitivities of the civilian community? Did you try to work together or just say, "The hell with it?"

GEN WEDEMEYER: No, it was not quite that way. It might have been with an individual, but you couldn't say that. That is something that is very important. I don't know anybody of my vintage who would be capable of using it as a generalization of bitterness. For example, when I criticize the way we fought World War II in Europe, I wanted to go ashore one whole year earlier. I fought for that right up to the end. As a matter of fact after the Quebec Conference in the fall of '43, I went down to report to Mountbatten in his new

command, the Southeast Asia Command, and Overlord took place in June 1944, right?

INTERVIEWER: Yes, sir.

GEN WEDEMEYER: I got a message from General Marshall. I will never forget it and I appreciate it. He said, "Your idea is working. The resistance is very strong. We are having a difficult time, but everybody now holds that you should have gone in there earlier, among us here talking." I got that message. My God, I appreciated it!

INTERVIEWER: Sir, that's interesting. Could you follow up on that?

GEN WEDEMEYER: Yes. Have you ever read my book?

INTERVIEWER: No, sir, I have not.

GEN WEDEMEYER: I wanted Anglo-American Forces to overrun Europe in lieu of Communist Forces with their commissars. My overall strategic thinking was confirmed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff when I presented it to them as a member of the little planning group. I

wasn't the senior planner. I had one of the nicest colonels as the chief of my planning group. In the original planning group there were four Navy and four Army. Let me give them to you. The American planner when the war broke out, in the first joint planning group was Ray Mattis. He was one of the finest men I ever knew. He was an Ames, Iowa, man. He was born and raised on a farm in Red Oak, Iowa. He was a prince. I never served under a man I had higher respect for. He had a good brain -- a good, solid man. He wasn't a deeply read man, an intellectual, but he was a top-flight man. He was my boss. A fellow named Jesse Bomber, whom I didn't know very well, was a good man, too. He didn't go to the Military Academy. I don't know what his background was, but he was an artillery man. Then there was Wedemeyer. There was also an Air Force man named Hanseal. Lieutenant Colonel "Possum" Hanseal was a brain, a creative man. You need a man like that who generates ideas. He wasn't stupid either. Those were the four Army. The four Navy were Cook; Rogers; Lichenstein, a Marine Corps major; and Sherman, who later became Chief of Naval Operations. They put an Army man and a Navy man in a cubicle together in the Munitions Building, and that's how he got acquainted with Sherman, who was marvelous. That

was the first joint planning group. The ideas that we are talking about now, about going into the European theatre, were generated or developed in this group. The Navy let the Army carry the ball on that, because they wanted to go out in the Pacific. Sherman did the work on all of them. They were thinking more in terms of the fleet out there -- the Navy bases and stuff like that. So, I was selected one day out of the planning group to present to the Joint Chiefs of Staff the plan of how we thought the allies ought to go into Europe. It was Overlord. The first Overlord plan -- Roundup we called it -- was done in April 1942. I was detailed by the President to accompany General Marshall and Mr. Harry Hopkins. So, I went over there with them; we flew over on Easter of 1942. By General Marshall's orders, I had to make a presentation of what I had done with the Joint Chiefs. I want to tell you, the President of the United States approved it, what we were going over to talk about. So, we weren't doing it all-military; the civilians were brought into it. After presenting it to the British planners, they had an opportunity overnight to talk to their chiefs. Then the next day, I had to do it to the planners and the chiefs together. Marshall and Hopkins accompanied me over there to the War Ministry. The next day we went

to the cabinet, the Prime Minister, and God, the whole works. Three times I had to present that plan! Now, the plan visualized our going across in June of 1943. At that time, the bulk of the Nazi forces were committed -- I mean irretrievably and deeply. Heavens, they were fighting for their lives that winter of 1942-43! Knowing that and having some knowledge of the top people in Germany, I felt that we should go across in '43. Why did I want to get across so soon? I have already mentioned it. I wanted Anglo-American Forces to overrun Western Europe, to preclude the penetration of Communism, replacing Nazism with Communism. That is exactly what happened. So, we did not win our political objective. We are great heroes. It was a great military victory all right, but military victories must be determined by your objective. That's why I said to you fellows earlier that you have to know what you are fighting for. What do we want to do? What is our objective here? Today, what do we want to do? If we go into war in Southwest Asia, I said to you I would go after that energy resource. Why do I want to go after that? We have oil over here. We no longer can be a world policeman. We are not a world subsidizer economically. Other people have to make a contribution. It has to be proportionate to their

capacity, to their potential, their ability to do it, and their willingness to do it. That's right. That is what the United Nations visualized. We don't even use the OAS [Organization of American States] down here right now. I'm criticizing now, and I know you fellows will go and put it into the Washington Post tomorrow, and I'll read it. Anyway, that was it.

INTERVIEWER: Sir, are any of these gentlemen in the Joint Planning Group you mentioned still surviving?

GEN WEDEMEYER: Mrs. Sherman swears that he was killed. He was Chief of Naval Operations and over in Spain. The Russians have a way -- they say they can do it -- they can shoot something into you, and that's it. Maybe it is potassium cyanide or something. That is what Goering used to defeat the hangman's noose, if you remember. All 11 were sentenced to be hung. I got a letter from the widow, Mrs. Jodl, way out in China, whose husband was sentenced to be hung. She asked me to write to Eisenhower and ask him not to hang him. He was willing to be shot if his peers thought that he had committed an offense, but he didn't want to be hung as a common criminal. Of course, I wrote to Ike right away about it. Jodl's brother was my instructor at the

German War College. That is the reason Mrs. Jodl wrote to me, I guess. I never met her. Later on, I used to go see Ike, when he was sick over in Walter Reed before he died. He never got that letter. He said, "I don't think I could have done anything about it anyway."

INTERVIEWER: Maybe you misunderstood me. You said there were eight people in this Joint Planning Group. Are any of those people still surviving?

GEN WEDEMEYER: That's the trouble with me. I get off on a tangent and give you these little refreshing stories. Sherman isn't alive because his wife tells me he was killed by the Communists. That's number one. Mattis, my boss, is dead. "Possum" Hanseal, Air Force Major General is still alive.
[End Tape W-171, side 1]

[Begin Tape W-171, side 2]
GEN WEDEMEYER: . . . some long, crazy name like Wedemeyer. Then Rogers, Navy, is dead. All of one side is dead. I seem to be the only one living, besides Hanseal. Hanseal was quite young. He is 5 or

6 years younger than I am, maybe more. Bud Underwood, though, is a four-star general and retired down in El Paso. He was one of my boys in War Plans Division. Sparrow, a major general living right here now, was one of my planners. If I could have sat down with some general who was my kind of general and could talk to him -- I would have given anything to do it. I had a wonderful father-in-law. He was a scholar and a terrific guy. He was a retired lieutenant general and a damned fine man. He was a scholarly type of a man. I did talk to him. Mrs. Wedemeyer can tell you -- I couldn't get at him very often and I just didn't talk to him. I was certainly hesitant about doing it.

INTERVIEWER: Sir, you mentioned you were proposing an invasion in 1943. Do you feel that the manpower and the industrial mobilization could have supported an invasion in 1943?

GEN WEDEMEYER: You're nasty in asking that question. That's a nasty question. (laughter) I told you that everything I took over to London was approved by the top people: manpower, the President of the United States, and everybody. Otherwise we would not have gone over there in a rather blase manner. We presented

this to these various people. I even accompanied Harry Hopkins to the Houses of Parliament, heard him go to great lengths in talking about everything like that, and answer questions in the House of Lords. When he made a speech there, he asked me to go with him. As much as anything could have been done at that time, in that atmosphere, in that environment -- I think everything had been coordinated properly. I mentioned industry, Knudsen, and Colonel Burns. I'm sure he was a colonel, to be a major general ultimately; Jimmy Burns, his name was. Didn't you ever hear of him?

INTERVIEWER: Yes, I did. James F. Burns.

GEN WEDEMEYER: Maybe he was made a civilian. I was made an ambassador in 1947 and sent to the Far East by President Truman. They told me not to wear a uniform and not to be a general. I was an ambassador.

INTERVIEWER: The reason I asked the question whether or not we could support it in '43, because as you well know, we had problems in '44 with certain items of equipment to be able to support the invasion.

GEN WEDEMEYER: I wasn't in on that. I was safely away. I took command inside the theatre and all my bloopers were being experienced by my followers, I guess. Seriously, I didn't hear much about it. I have read the "green books" ["US Army in World War II"] about it. We did have problems, but they weren't too bad.

INTERVIEWER: So, in your judgment, the manpower and industrial mobilization could have supported the invasion back in '43?

GEN WEDEMEYER: Oh, not in my judgment, but in the judgment of people who were responsible in those areas. Otherwise, I wouldn't have gone over there and said they could. As I said, we were going to have the impetus. It had to be an impetus after you got alignment. They could quickly drive us off if we didn't have impetus and continued flow of supplies. In my judgment, yes; otherwise, we would not have gone over there. Incidently, there is a book written by a fellow named Walter Dunn, from Des Moines, Iowa. I never heard of the guy. He comes out with a book and the damned thing is just terrific in this area, that we could have done it on the logistics manpower side.

God, I'll see if I can get it for you. I'll get Mrs. Hill, my secretary. I went to the West Coast to talk to a fellow named Kaiser about the landing craft that he was building for us. When would it be available? What schedule? There was a degree to be done by the number one man in charge of this. Yet, there were a lot of my people doing it, too, for me. So, we did try to bring these things together in a coordinated, integrated manner. It wasn't quite perfect. I told you some of the things that we did that were stupid.

INTERVIEWER: Did you find yourself establishing any priorities?

GEN WEDEMEYER: Establishing priorities? No, Wedemeyer didn't have that authority. I didn't have any authority at all. I was just an advisor, a suggester.

INTERVIEWER: Did you suggest any priorities, then?

GEN WEDEMEYER: Sure, I could. I would do it negatively, indirectly. Visualize having this outfit go to the northwest coast of Africa, and we were going to have to have certain combat forces. Combat readiness is the thing one had to figure on in war

planning. I'll tell you who did that for us. That was over in Ground Forces -- General McNair's headquarters. I could call him up. I remember so well coming back from Argonaut Conference, General Marshall and the President already agreed to send a division to Iceland. Coming back on the train, General Marshall said to me, "Wedemeyer, when I get back to Washington, I want you to put on my desk what division is going." I said, "I can tell you now, sir. It is the 4th Division, commanded by General [Charles H.] Bonesteel." In those days you remembered things. I'm telling you now, I don't do that, but I did then. They were combat ready. That meant they had had squad training through division level. The whole division had trained down in Louisiana. It had a division problem. They had all that training, and eventually all the units were up for war, combat ready, with ammunition and weapons. I mentioned earlier 37 mm ammunition was something that we always were looking for in the antitank battalion. Anyway, a lot of our communications equipment were short supplied. It gives you an idea how some of those things were worked out. It wasn't really too bad but could have been better.

INTERVIEWER: Massive job.

GEN WEDEMEYER: Yes, massive is right. There was chance for many errors, and those of us who made them freely admit it. There is no defense for it.

INTERVIEWER: I would expect, too, that Lend-Lease had a real impact on planning at that stage of the game.

GEN WEDEMEYER: Hell, another thing, show me how these things work, you fellows can get that book, I'll call Mrs. Hill, at my office now. Otherwise, I will forget it. Maybe she has that book of Dunn's over there; maybe I sent it to Hoover. Most of my things are gone now. I don't have a good library for you at all. Most of my books that I'm now reading are philosophy. I'm rereading Current; that is one of my favorite Germans. I'm reading in German to keep my German going and, also, because he was one of my favorite philosophers, Schopenhauer. I'm not a psychiarist. I'm a reader of psychiatry. I started, of course, to be interested in medicine. Fellows, I have had such a wonderful life! I met a fellow named Bill Menninger. I was told he was put in charge by the Secretary of Defense, and taken out to the Far East to look over combat fatigue. He wanted to examine a lot of our soldiers out there, and

I went with him. He was one of the greatest things that ever happened to me.

INTERVIEWER: What was your relationship with General Hershey during the development of the Victory Program?

GEN WEDEMEYER: My personal relationship?

INTERVIEWER: Professional relationship with him.

GEN WEDEMEYER: Practically none. Just friendly. He was a nice old man. He's dead now, but I've met him several times. I always complimented him. I felt he was doing a fine job. A nice old man.

INTERVIEWER: I thought there would have been some professional relationship inasmuch as he had . . .

GEN WEDEMEYER: There was a little -- no question about it. The quotas and the people knew what he was trying to do. Those things were coordinated. Now, I may have gone over to talk to him personally, and he would name one of his subordinates to meet with one of my subordinates. That's the way I operated. I couldn't be at all these places. I had to tie the things

together gradually. I can't tell you how cooperative everybody was. I had a rather discouraging or disillusioning experience in G3 [Assistant Chief of Staff (Operations and Plans)]. There was a brigadier general there, head of a G3 operations unit. I didn't know him. I never served under him. That was always a handicap. If we all knew each other, it's easier to talk to somebody. You know that. I went in there with my plan; he pooh-poohed and made fun of me, as did some of his subordinates. They were sitting in on the meeting which I organized to tell them what I proposed to do and to get their ideas. I didn't go there as an authority. I went there to seek help. I was just a major or a lieutenant colonel at the time when I wrote that thing, and he was a brigadier general -- a big shot. He was supposed to be an important member of the general staff. He did that and I never forgave him. You never do, you know, when you are humiliated before other people as I was, even though he was right. He said, "Why, you can't get 4 million men over in Europe." That's what I visualized early, as I remember, to get that many men over in Europe. I don't remember now; so, fellows, don't hold me to that.

INTERVIEWER: This may be a difficult, hypothetical question.

GEN WEDEMEYER: Some of these answers I'm giving would be difficult, but I sort of trust you two men, realizing that I have a tremendous amount of humility. I have told you before that I have had a wonderful experience in life, and I'm grateful. If you will, accept that in the same spirit as I asked him, too.

INTERVIEWER: As someone who has been through mobilization of our country, and, of course, who has done a lot of reading and kept up with the issues since your retirement, are you comfortable that our nation could go through another major mobilization as we did?

GEN WEDEMEYER: Oh, I'm not comfortable at all with our strategy. If you could but know.

INTERVIEWER: And why?

GEN WEDEMEYER: I'll give you some stuff to read, then you can come back and see me if you feel inclined. I'm not asking you to come over here. You are right across the river. I have other people coming out here. The

Secretary of the Navy sent a group out here one day and I have been pestered. They want to come back. I'm patting myself on the back, but it is because of just what you said. I have had this wonderful experience and I'm good humored about telling people without being too abrasive about it, and I don't want them to misinterpret my attitude. I feel I have a debt to pay the government. That's what I'm doing here with you fellows. I have said to you earlier, that I would give anything if I would have had an opportunity to talk to people who were in World War I. I had a grand chief though, General Marshall, whom I didn't know until after the German War College, when I came home and talked to him about what I had experienced over there. He was so nice to me. He was nicer in a military way than anybody else. All the other men, like that G3, I think they looked at me with a jaundiced eye. I don't know how they looked at me, but I didn't get the questions that came from intelligent people, who were truly interested in what I got from Marshall.

INTERVIEWER: Sir, you said you were not comfortable with our ability to be able to mobilize again as we did in World War II.

GEN WEDEMEYER: I'm uncomfortable with our overall strategy. I think some terrible things have happened -- so many things. One, just a microcosm is that attempt to go into Iran to relieve the hostages. There is something wrong there in the planning. There were a lot of lives lost and we didn't accomplish our mission. Now, that's a microcosm. For global strategy I think we are in a very dangerous situation right now, not in a hostile but in a distrusting world. There are a lot of people in our country here. I can't speak for a lot of people, but I sense by reading that they don't understand strategy at all. Let me tell you something. I put in a new word. Here is the "I" again that I warned you about, Hampton, and you said you would stay with me. You wouldn't go home when I kept using the pronoun "I." When I went to the National War College lectures at the end of World War II, when I was DCSOPS, I was sent over there to do that. That was okay. I enjoyed that group of men -- they were marvelous, the questions they asked. They were a wonderful group, a wonderful audience. I gave them a new definition of strategy, which I will give you very quickly, both of you. Well, it is this way. If you picked up a dictionary, I have a big thick dictionary right down there, and read the definition of strategy. What is

the definition of strategy? It is derived from the Greeks' strategia, meaning leadership. As the years go along, you come on through the Romans, through the Persians, Ghengis Khan, Alexander, and Philip, all those areas you will find the strategists met. They were getting into the field of tactics, which is the combat military use of your forces against the enemy who is infringing upon your territory, your right, or something like that. Strategy is an art and a science. It is an art because you cannot be too exacting in everything you have to do in strategy. You can't tell the mood of the population or things like that, so accept that it is an art. And it is a science, because a lot of things can be determined with a scientific exactitude, which you two gentlemen have been asking questions about. You would like a little more exactness on my part on some of the things you are asking me. Those things could be determined with scientific accuracy. So, it is an art and a science. Now, I say -- here's the definition I gave to the class there at the War College. Had it put up on the screen. They were so cooperative. Heading up their strategy is the art and science of employing all a nation's resources against the forces or opposed to your enemy. I don't know. Anyway, please don't scold me, I just

don't know the wording exactly. I tell you what it has done. It has influenced the definition of strategy in your books up there in the War College and down in the Air University -- that I can tell you. They don't say, "Wedemeyer said that it ought to be changed," but I was the one who put those ideas out. I repeat: nothing is original today. You take blood, sweat, and tears. I know the very name of a writer over in England who said that long before back in the War of the Roses. So, I mean those kind of things are remembered by that wonderful man, Churchill. You know that. So, don't hold me too much to anything. Just let me have a lot of latitude. When you say all the nation's resources, fellows, that's what I meant. The students would say, "General Wedemeyer, what were the resources?" I had that all in a line, the four categories of national resources. I categorized these four: political, economic, psychological-sociological, and military. And, if you use the first three in an intelligent, timely manner, you minimize the chances of using naked force with death and destruction. You know as well as I do, at the time of our counting they didn't have these ideas because the conditions in the world at that time did not require them to do it this way. I have mentioned political, economic, psycho-social, and the

fourth one, military, to use as a last resort. Why? I'm concerned about the atomic power. We have the nuclear weapons. I know something about them. For 3 years I was a member of a committee appointed by Truman to determine the future use of atomic power. The medicinal use, commercial use, as well as the military use. This was composed of about eight physicists and there were two military on it. There was an admiral and a general -- myself. So, I know a little bit about the implications of the employment of atomic power and nuclear power. Now, we go from there so I don't want to use military power. I want political, economic, and psycho-social power.

INTERVIEWER: This completes the taped interview with General Wedemeyer.

[End Tape W-171, side 2]

APPENDIX A

BIOSKETCH - GENERAL ALBERT C. WEDEMEYER, USA, Retired

GENERAL ALBERT C. WEDEMEYER, USA, RETIRED

BORN: 9 July 1897 at Omaha, Nebraska

SCHOOLS:

United States Military Academy, 1918
Infantry School, 1920
Command and General Staff School, 1936
German War College, 1938

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:

1920-22	29th Infantry
1922-23	Aide to BG Paul B. Malone
1923-25	31st Infantry; later 57th Infantry, Philippine Islands
1925-27	12th Infantry
1927-30	Aide to Commanding General of the District of Washington
1931-32	15th Infantry, Tientsin, China
1932-33	Aide to MG C. E. Kilbourne
1933-34	Aide to MG Stanley D. Embick
1936	Intelligence Division, G2, War Department, General Staff
1939	29th Infantry
1940	Executive Officer, 94th Antitank Battalion
1940-41	Training Section, Office of the Chief of Infantry
1941-42	Plans Division, General Staff, War Department. While a member of Plans Group, served on Joint Strategic Committee and Combined Subjects Committee. In March 1942 the War Plans Division became the Operations Division
1942-43	Assistant to MG Thomas Handy, Assistant Chief of Staff, Operations Division
1943	Represented US Chief of Staff at a conference with Chinese and British leaders in waging war against Japan
1943-44	American Deputy Chief of Staff, Southeast Asia Command
1944-46	CG, US Army Forces Chinese Theater of Operations, also Chief of Staff to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek
1946-47	CG, Second Army
1947	Special Envoy of the President of the United States to China
1947-49	Director, Plans and Operations Division; later Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans and Combat Operations, General Staff, War Department
1949-51	CG, Sixth Army

1951	Retired from Active Service
1951-54	Vice President and Director, AVCO Manufacturing Company
1954-56	Vice President and Director, Rheem Manufacturing Company
1959	Chairman of the Board of Directors, Academy Life Insurance Company

AWARDS:

Distinguished Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters;
Distinguished Flying Cross

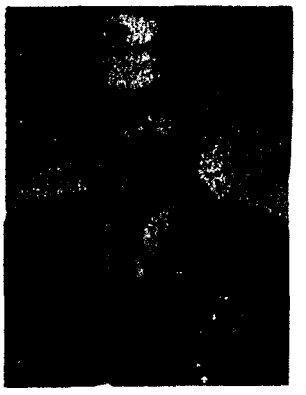
AUTHOR:

Wedemeyer Reports

APPENDIX B

BIOSKETCH - COLONEL DON H. HAMPTON, USA

HAMPTON, Don H.
LTC Inf 503-44-9124



DOR: 13 Jan 78 (62 Yr Gp)

BORN: 31 Dec 38, Spearfish, SD

WIFE'S NAME: Karen Pratt

CHILDREN: Toni, 20

EDUCATION:

Dates	Name and Place	Study	Degree
1957-61	South Dakota State Col, Brookings, SD	Econ/Pol Sci	BS
1969-71	South Dakota State Col, Brookings, SD	EducAdmin & Counseling	MS

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:

Dates	Position, Organization and Location
Jan 62-Aug 63	Plt Ldr, COB, 2d ABG, 187th Inf, 101st Abn Div, Ft Campbell, KY
Aug 63-Aug 64	CO, Co C, 2d Bn, 506th Inf, 101st Abn Div, Ft Campbell, KY
May 65-May 66	CO, HHC, 1st Bn, 506th Inf, 101st Abn Div, Ft Campbell, KY
Jul 66-Jul 67	CO, Co A, 173d Abn Bde, Vietnam
Sep 68-Sep 69	Bn Advisor, 2d Ranger Group, USMACV
Feb 71-Jun 74	Instr, USAIS, Ft Benning, GA
Jul 75-Jul 76	XO, 1/32d Inf, 2d Inf Div, Korea
Aug 76-Dec 78	Instr, ROTC, Texas Tech, Lubbock, TX
Mar 79-Aug 80	Cdr, 2d Bn, 17th Inf, 7th Inf Div, Ft Ord, CA
Sep 80-Jun 83	IG, USAIGA, DA, Washington, DC

SERVICE SCHOOLS: Grad - USACGSC, 75

INSTRUCTOR EXPERIENCE: Instructor Training, USAIS, 71-74

SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS: OPMS - Inf (11), Op, Plans, Tng & Force Dev (54); Prcht, Instr

BATTLE CAMPAIGNS: Vietnam, 4

AWARDS: BSM w 2 V & 3 OLC, MSM w 2 OLC, AM, ARCOM, PUC, CIB, MastPrchtBad, RgrT

APPENDIX C

MEMORANDUM OF ACCESS - GENERAL ALBERT C. WEDEMEYER, USA, RETIRED

APPENDIX D

ACCESS AGREEMENT - COLONEL DON H. HAMPTON, USA

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
US ARMY MILITARY HISTORY INSTITUTE
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

USAMHI

2 April 1984
(Date)

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, USAMHI

SUBJECT: Access to Oral History Tapes and Transcripts

1. I participated in the AY 1984 Senior Officer Oral History Program by interviewing "Mobilization Planning",

2. With respect to the audio tape and the transcription of the oral history interview cited in paragraph 1 above, I hereby grant that, subject to any restrictions imposed by the interviewee:

a. Both the tape and transcript may be made available to bonafide researchers and scholars, military and civilian, at the discretion of the Director, US Army Military History Institute;

b. The transcript may be quoted, in whole or in part, in official Army publications.

3. In granting the access and use conditions in paragraph 2 above it is my understanding that:

a. In any publication of the transcript of the interviews which I conducted I will be given appropriate acknowledgement as the interviewer;

b. Subject to the priority claims of the interviewee, I retain certain literary rights to the tapes and transcripts of the interviews which I conducted until my death or permanent incapacitation at which time such rights shall pass to the United States Army;

c. All audio tapes and interview transcripts remain the (physical) property of the United States Army;

d. Without my express written permission, any audio tape or transcript of the interviews which I conducted will not be commercially exploited by any person whosoever except for a brief quotation of ten lines or less.

INTERVIEWER Don H. Hampton
(Signature)

LTC DON H. HAMPTON
(Print Name)

Office of the Acting Director 20 December 1989

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Access to Interviews with General Albert C. Wedemeyer

Based on review of the transcripts of interviews conducted in the Senior Officer Oral History Program in 1973 and the topical oral history program, Mobilization Planning, in 1984, and on his access agreement for his Senior Officer Oral History--I authorize access to these transcripts for all bona fide researchers and scholars.

MARTIN W. ANDRESEN
Lieutenant Colonel, FA
Acting Director